

hallmarks



fall

2000

ART WORK

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DEATH

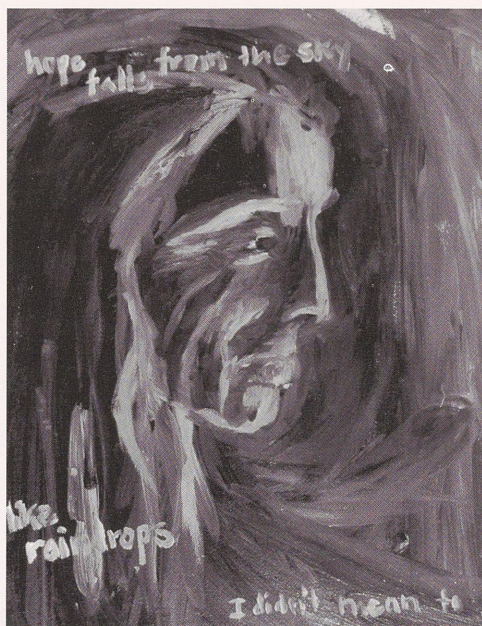
Silence,
Except for the uneven breaths
Of a person afraid.

Slowly it crept towards her,
Covering all it passed in its seeping darkness.
And she could hear it.
She could feel it.
Only she sensed it lingering in the shadows,
Waiting to claim her shortening breaths.

The bright lights and bustling people
Did nothing to dilute her darkness.
It tiptoed into the corners of her mind,
Slowly taking over.
But she couldn't let it take her breath.

They all crowded around her,
Talking to her,
Pleading.
But the light in their eyes was invisible to her,
Because of the shadows
Creeping up her body.
Her feet, and legs
Turned cold.
Then her fingers.
And arms were gripped by it.
Then her eyes,
And she breathed her last,
And was gone.

LAUREN EZEIL (10)



PANCAKES: An Ode

Should I eat pancakes?
Or should I try
To make waffles on the fly?
Oh the perplexion that is
the enigma of breakfast food.
If I made them would I smother
Their buttery bodies in syrup
With some cream or strawberries?
Oh the perplexion that is
my illusion of breakfast food.
I can't lie
I can't deny
That in the end hashbrowns are
My true blue friend.
But should I eat those pancakes?
Should I even try
To prepare these round discs
that if I burnt could then fly?
Oh pancakes. The perplexion of the enigma of
breakfast food.

THE END.

CARA HIMMELFARB (12)

A VARIATION ON THE WORD "LAUGH" IN THE STYLE OF
MARGARET ATWOOD'S "A VARIATION ON THE WORD
'SLEEP'"

I would like to watch you laughing,
Which is plausible.
I would like to laugh with you,
To enter your laughter as its
Loud, jolly chuckle hums in my ear.

And laugh with you until
The sky breaks loose and empties
It's secrets of shy giggles
and boisterous cackles.

I would like to crack
The silly joke
The one-liner
The punchline
That sends you railing for hours.

I would like to watch tears
Ease their way to your eyes
And see your cheeks blush
With amusement.

I would like to watch your head
Fall back and lurch forward
As laughter rocks your body.

I would like to watch your eyes
Twinkle and blaze.
I would like to be that tickled
And that familiar.

LAURA CALLAWAY (11)

final Note

Rippling current
tumble over me
Nothing more
than I will ever be
Thinking maybe
I should have turned back
Hoping
there is nothing that I lack
Windy water
take me by surprise
Shear terror
beats through my eyes
Eagerness
to go back to land
Mindful now
that they won't understand
Somber shadows
give me to the deep
Here it is
finale to my sleep

KATIE ATKINS (10)



Solitary rose
Dusty and dead
The leftover memoir
Now blackened around the edges
As old roses are
And outside the sun sets
Cloaked in purple
Orange
Pink
As night sweeps over the land
How quickly day
Fades into night!
How quickly the petals
Droop over the side
Of the crystal vase

Obituary
Of a stranger
Aged thirty-seven years
She fell into the eternal sleep
And withered
All those years ago
Her heart broken
By some Prince Charming
Who never showed up
To break the charm
The evil witch had spoken

And lying in a crystal coffin
The beautiful rose
Now wearily wilts
The crimson tone
Of her cheeks
Gone forever
And though most of the petals
Have fallen from the shelf
I cannot bear to take
The vase down
To clean it out
The best I can do
Is to gather the dropping petals
And lay them in my potpourri box
So they may fill
My room with the perfume
The smell of forgotten love

CLAIRE BERRY (8)

My Very Own Judy Fisk

She has a net in which she catches souls
She caught mine
And I got tangled up in her unconditional love
I look into the crowded stands and our eyes meet at first glance
Our souls are connected in some mysterious way
After all, she is my very own Judy Fisk.
Striving to be like her
I hope one day I can give a little dirty faced girl the sweet coca cola kisses she gave me
I hope one day I can hide in the darkness while a little dirty faced girl absorbs the spotlight
She has a brush in which she paints the picture of life
She painted mine
And I became entranced with her warm words of encouragement
And her "thumbs up" attitude on living life to its fullest
After all, she is my very own Judy Fisk.
Striving to be like her
I hope one day I can tuck a little dirty faced girl into bed at night
I hope one day I can make silly lullabies that make a little dirty faced girl smile and laugh
I have grown a bit
But when I tuck myself in bed and drift into a peaceful slumber
I softly whisper
"Thank you Lord, for bringing Heaven here on this very Earth"

Nancy Sisk (9)



BREATH TOWARDS DESTINY

I would like to watch you die
Which I cannot
I would do anything to die with you
To exit this life as you breathe your first breath
Of the new eternal life

And to hold your hand
And feel with you that moment
You live your entire life to experience
That moment of pure bliss, eternal happiness, and awe
To walk with you through golden gates
Across glistening clouds
Past golden angels
Past glowing halos
Past silky feathered wings
Towards your final judgment
I want to look into your softly worn eyes
And see their childish excitement
As you find that all you ever imagined has come true
I want to be with you when your worst fear becomes
Your greatest happiness
I want to walk with you in your paradise
And swim with you through fountains of youth
To reunite with your long lost friends
And to watch with you
As our kids grow old
Without us
I want to feel your tears upon my face
As you overwhelm with joy, fear, and pain
I would love to do none other than this with you
From now and through eternity

I would like to be that last breath of life
That inhibits you for only a moment's time
I would like to be that first breath of life
Leading you towards your destiny

ABBY GALLAGHER (10)



BUNDLED

Shrunken necks pull my eyebrows to my nose.
One after another,
various synthetics

(polypropylene and polartec)

bulk around my waist
in deep folds and lumps.

"Are you sure you'll be warm enough?
I won't have you getting sick."

Worry knits Mom's brows.

I manage a muffled assent
through a coarse wool scarf.

She turns from the basket of lonely mittens
and separated pairs

with a bright smile and a pink stocking hat
topped by a teal fuzzball.

"No, I won't wear that."

"Your ears will freeze off."

Mom reasoned

as if she had witnessed such events.

With a shake of my head,

I pull the scarf up around my ears—

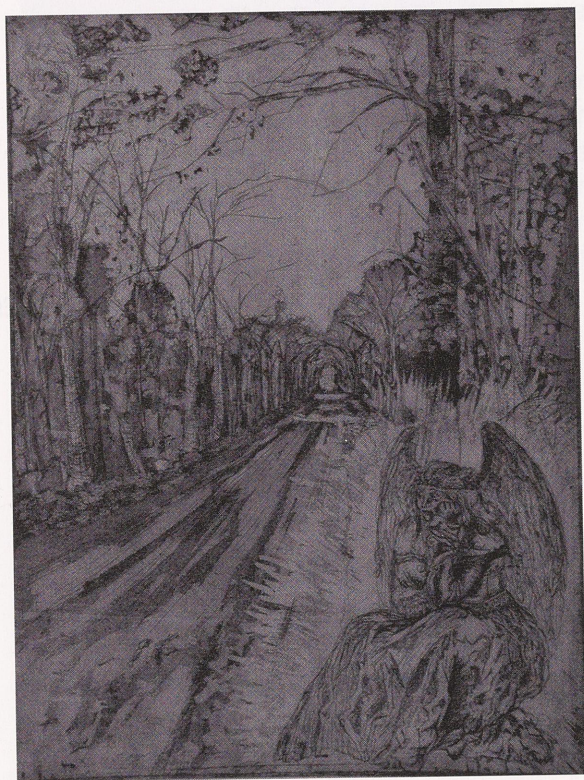
an Arab's turban—

"There!"

and waddle out into rolling dunes of snow
chilled,

but not frozen.

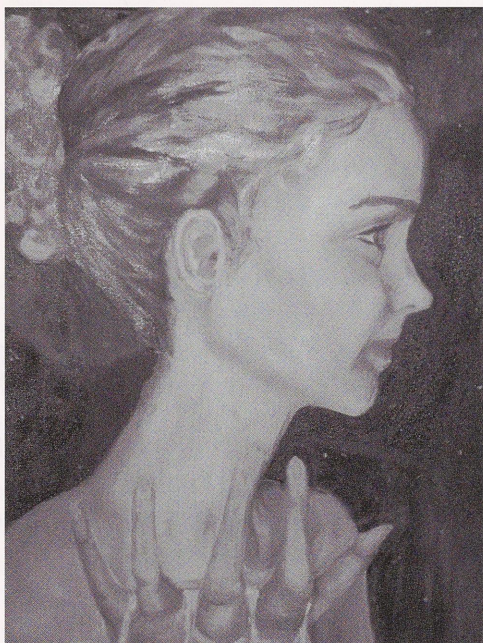
LAURALEE(10)



POCKET
AFTER RICHARD TILLINGHAST'S "TABLE"

A little boy full of sadness and anger
Stuffs his bubble gum wrapper in his jacket pocket,
Puts beads on a string there.
He puts his movie stubs and tickets in the jacket pocket.
He put in there the screams from his parents bedroom
Hiding them from the rest of the world.
He put his money and loose change in the pocket.
And then along with it put his fights with school kids.
He put his dreams of another life in there
So his parents didn't know
That he wanted to get away.
Away from the non existent love
In there.
He put in the jacket pocket his nightmares
of what he would face the next day
From the fist that made him so insecure
That gave him those bruises and black eyes
He put those in there.
The pocket bulged
And started crying because
It had to hide such horrible things.

HUNTLEY RODES (10)



SUMMER RAIN

The hot, sharp, sun beats heavily
on the dry, dusty ground.
As clouds roll in swiftly
drawing dark shadows all around.

The lone tree welcomes the shade
painted by bellowing clouds.
Its sparse branches bend and sway
and shake in excitement, as thunder roars
aloud.

Streaks of lightning dance about,
signaling the heavenly rains.
The tree beneath, parched with drought,
rejoices, relieved of its thirstful pain.

ABBY GALLAGHER (10)

PERFECTION

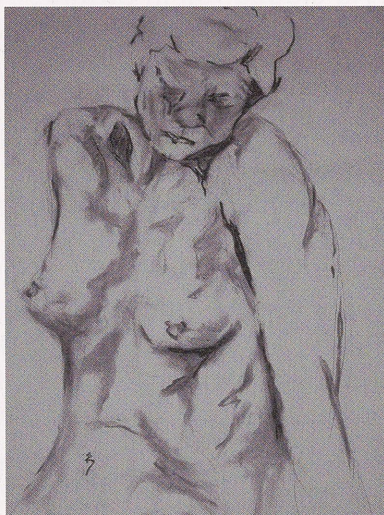
Girls in bikinis and slinky dresses battle
Trying to prove they're the ideal
Hoping to reign as Miss America
The epitome of flawlessness

Unhappy expectants rejoice at the legalization
Of a simple pill with the ability to rid
Oneself of an unwanted fetus
A nuisance in our suburban, 2.1 kids, 1 dog/cat society

A wealthy-crabby-90-year-old-wheelchair bound- alcoholic-lady
Passes out pencils at her Christmas party
Solidly pink with the event stamped on them in gold
A piece of beauty in her unbeautiful life

The moon rises above the world
With a little chunk missing
Not as big, not as beautiful as the full moon
Not perfect

KATE GREGORY (8)



TARZAN

Your constant prattle leaves me pathetic and cold,
Only I gild my elated spirits,
For I have no other choice.
You rent my heart when your pills are not swallowed,
And you make me feel obligated to care for you.
You are a coward of your own disease!
Like ten thousand tons resting on my weak shoulders,
You weigh down my very existence,
And make me question my place in this world.
You so wild and free.
You so depressed and confined.
I scream, but you do not hear me.
For you are out of this world,
In a distant circus land.
You wish to fly among acrobats on trapeze.
But you wished in the wrong world of reality my friend.
Yet the generous ground hit you softly,
For you still live on.
Thank God you still live on.

Nancy Sisk (9)



SIDE WALK SORROW

No shoe

Just a foot

The back calf connects to a raw ankle

The grubby knee in front bends forward

She may tumble over herself

Two legs;

One leads

One drags

The humped back

Complete with a saggy torso

On it, scraggly rags

The pockets of an old knit sweater

Dangle by threads at her sides

Hands like stubs

One of them with three fingers

Two on the other

Grip a paper mug

The sickly arm leads

Up

To her head

Nose shifted

Slightly to the left

Making an angle

With her low cheek bone

Uneven eyes
Minute black dots
That poke out between the thick wrinkles

The corners of her mouth
Both pointing upward toward her cheeks

Cracked lips
Separated by a distinct space
In which three decaying teeth lie

Seeming to display
A smile

KATIE ATKINS (10)





A salty glaze covered my cheeks
From the preceeding deluge of those unwanted
drops of water
Paving a path through powder
Down the crease of my forced smile
And landing in my trembling mouth

A turned back
Folded arms
(the pose that showed your anger boiling like brim-
stone beneath your cool
exterior)
eyebrows knit into disapproving land forms,
forehead wrinkled into hills of disfavor,
and mouth pursed like a volcano preparing to spew
forth its molten contents

how ironic
that you who knows my mind so well
who can feel my emotion in yourself
are the one that hurts me the most.

ALICE FORT (II)

CHOCOLATE MILKSHAKES

Chocolate milkshakes
taste like Saturday afternoons
with my Papaw.

Thick and rich
like the smell of his pipe
but savorably different.

Cold and smooth
as the benches where we sat
enjoying our shakes.

Chocolate
like the seats of his car
in which he picked me up.

Size small
like me because calories
weren't a worry.

With a straw
as always because it just tasted better
that way.

Indescribable
because the best things in life
can't be defined.

ELIZABETH RAMSEY (12)

WATER

You look at me and say "I see the ocean in your eyes."
But all I know is everything around me is so dry.

MEGUMI MATSUDA (12)



A Memory...

Standing outside the local Lowes Home Improvement Warehouse, a wind of autumn, trying to sneak in, trickles past me and ruffles my moppy red hair. I clench the plastic sack I came for to protect the priceless industrial goods inside from being caught by the gust. Other targets were not so lucky. The leaves of one island tree in a concrete wasteland jump and scatter at the surprise and glide unwillingly to the pavement below. I watch them search frantically for a familiar place to stop and rest; a place where they can nestle between branches and blades of grass instead of broken beer bottles and empty cigarette boxes. But they can find no such place.

Three years ago they tore down my dream house. They tore it down and reassured my growing suspicions that the town I'd lived in my entire life was destined to become yet another commercialized suburban nightmare. I was glad to be at school the day they tore it down. I could never watch it just as I could never watch an ancient monarch be slain by the youthful, modern heir. The power tool, light fixture, two by four deprived mob had made its decision. And, I, the lowly servant of the outdated, impractical, was left with only a florid bleeding heart to bear as a caveat. The appearance of a new Walgreens, Tigermart, and even a Starbucks hinted the oncoming danger, but I was too drunk with the crimson memories to pay heed to any forebodings. Sometimes the wine of denial tastes the best.

A ten year old princess stands tugging at the long braids the autumn breeze has upset. Dusty, brown toes grip the broken cobblestone path leading up to the last

antebellum house left in her town. Her chubby finger boldly teases the tired doorbell. But the chime has its revenge as it fails to carry out its orders. She is not discouraged. Around the scarlet brick wall, gilded fall fields undulate in the soft respiration of the coming evening. Haybales channel the down and create perfect suites for her lustrous imagination to fill. She leaps from one to the next, too intent on completing the bound to address the danger of snakes or sink holes. The child comes to a halt at the final mound and bends to rest on her grass-stained knees. Before turning to start back again, she slurps the cool air and looks ahead. The majestic archaic home, filled with so many treasures of old, stands proudly on the hill in front of her. All around the aged Matron abide lofty arborous soldiers always ready to protect their lady from harm. The vista startles the girl as she perceives, even at her tender age, the profound beauty and incomparable aura surrounding the place. Sighing, she cherishes the last breaths of sunlight.

What need is there for sunlight now that super-high watt lamps illuminate our lives? The parking lots, and the lumber yards, and the isles and isles of any home improvement supply you would ever need mercilessly flaunt their commercial superiority on the very grave of beautiful antiquity manifested. The inevitable industrial apocalypse has seized control again-- but do not overlook its attractions. It has much to offer: quality goods, convenient locale, and the brazen absence of anything even remotely transcendently captivating.

LEAN HIGH (12)

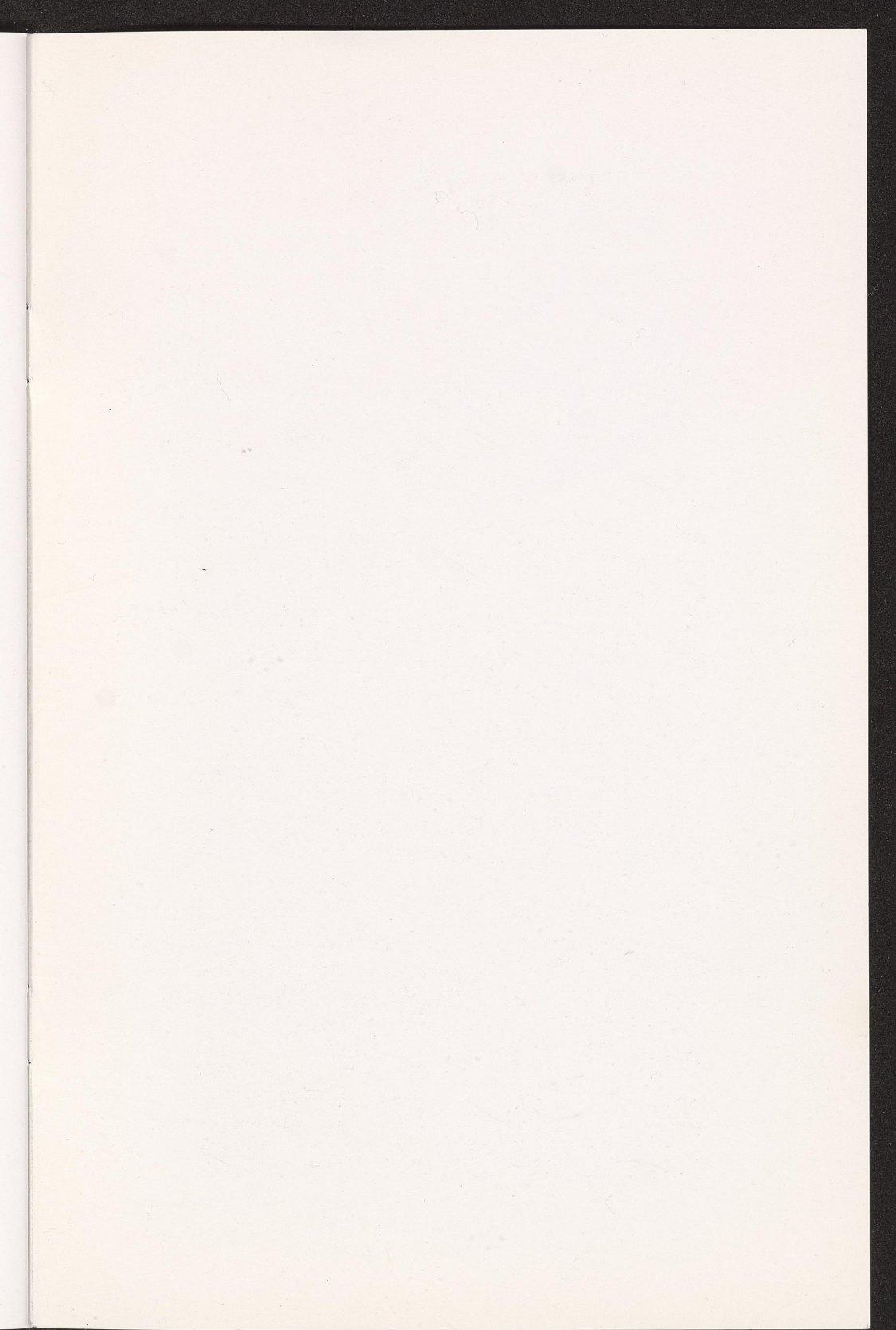
TO AN ASPIRING ARTIST

Lost in the muddy swirl of civilization,
You want to know what you're doing shouting
For pictures of rolling meadows
Or beautiful songs of forests.

And art! You need to know what art really is:
An expression of green in the way it feels
Passion sloping into truth
A sleeping stream you don't want to follow.

LAURALEE (10)





hAlMArKS

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